

Using Online Speeches for Supporting the Teaching of English Public Speaking

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Abstract: Online speeches are the most tangible and valuable sources of authentic materials for speech models. As a case in point, one of Barack Obama's first-term presidential campaign speeches entitled "Our Time for Change has Come" was chosen and used to support the teaching of English public speaking. The videocast serves to become a good model of a political speech in the real world of English.

Key words: Online English speech, authentic political speech, English public speaking

Introduction

In a public speaking class, upper intermediate students of English are coached to deliver a speech or argumentative opinion on a particular issue of interest. Out of various skills, students have to master, among other things, the choice of content and that of expression. The first deals mostly with the choice and arrangement of ideas; the later the choice of grammatical forms to express the intended messages.

Well-selected speeches of influential figures can become good models of public speaking pertaining to the choice of content and that of expression. This paper is to demonstrate one of the most tangible ways of benefitting authentic materials available in the real world of English. The focus is on the incorporation of an online speech as represented by Obama's "Our Time for Change has Come" (Obama, 2008a,b) as authentic teaching materials for the teaching of English public speaking.

Theoretical Basis

Tomlinson and Masuhara (2010: 252) underscore the invaluable experience that teachers may gain as they are involved in locally designed materials and use them to cater for the particular needs and wants of specific groups of real target students. Cahyono (Ed., 2010) provides impetus for local English teachers to make good use of internet resources to develop tailor-made teaching materials.

Teaching procedures

- **Pre-teaching**

Students are to familiarize themselves with the speech that consists of 3 broad divisions of speech organization – introduction, body, and conclusion - to be further divided into 5 main ideas:

	Speech Organization
1	Introduction
	Expression of thank and appreciation
2	Body
	A call for a much greater coalition for change for American common cause
	Thanking those who work for the victory
	The spirit of hope is alive to remake the nation and the world
3	Conclusion
	A call that the victory of the rising coalition should inspire the rest of the nation.

- **Whilst-teaching**

Students are to watch thoroughly the video clip of Obama’s speech - “Our Time for Change has Come” (Obama, 2008b). After that, they are to listen to the speech for the second time by simultaneously examining its text.

- **Post-teaching**

Students are to work in a group to designate the speech chunks of the text to be properly placed under the subcategories of the speech organization as outlined in the Pre-teaching. The completed target work refers to the same speech as analyzed by Gunawan (2012).

Reflection

In this speech, Obama uses the introductory clause “*You said the time has come*” three times to underscore that his campaign is gaining a momentum. He irresistibly enforces his better prospect as a coalition for change is building up throughout the country. He uses the occasion to remind the people of New Hampshire, if they give him the same chance as the people of Iowa have done, he will be the president for America who makes affordable health care available, frees American from the tyranny of oil, ends the war, restores American moral standing, and fights against the common threats of the 21st century.

Obama underscores his victory by repeating the introductory clauses “*this was the moment*” five times to highlight that he and his supporters are beginning to beat

Washington ways, tear down barriers, and prompt more people to become voters. Obama also repeats as many as ten times his philosophy of hope that serves to be a driving force for his campaign and the motivating force for him to run for the US President. He uses an anecdote of his own life as a personalized illustration of the American dream that could only be found in America. From there he points out that hope also becomes the “*bedrock*” of the nation and the force to “*remake*” the world they live in.

Obama concludes his speech saying that the message from Iowa should be carried further to the rest of the country to convince the people that the coalition is capable of overcoming the political barrier as he says: “*we are not a collection red states and blue states*”, but “*(w)e are the United States of America*”.

5. Conclusion

The speech in focus has been used as one possible model of a political speech in a public speaking class. The students are taught to be familiar with both the choice of content and that of expression in the speech.

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Appendix : Barack Obama's Iowa Caucuses Speech: "Our Time for Change has Come"



Accessed Dec. 5, 2010 from <http://crooksandliars.com/2008/01/04/barack-obamas-victory-speech-in-iowa>

DES MOINES, Iowa – January 3, 2008

(1) Expression of thank and appreciation

Thank you, Iowa.

You know, they said this day would never come. They said our sights were set too high. They said this country was too divided, too disillusioned to ever come together around a common purpose. But on this January night, at this defining moment in history, you have done what the cynics said we couldn't do. You have done what the state of New Hampshire can do in five days. You have done what America can do in this new year, 2008.

In lines that stretched around schools and churches, in small towns and in big cities, you came together as Democrats, Republicans and independents, to stand up and say that we are one nation. We are one people. And our time for change has come.

(2) A call for a much greater coalition for change for American common cause

You said the time has come to move beyond the bitterness and pettiness and anger that's consumed Washington. To end the political strategy that's been all about division, and instead make it about addition. To build a coalition for change that stretches through red states and blue states. Because that's how we'll win in November, and that's how we'll finally meet the challenges that we face as a nation. We are choosing hope over fear. We're choosing unity over division, and sending a powerful message that change is coming to America.

You said the time has come to tell the lobbyists who think their money and their influence speak louder than our voices that they don't own this government -- we do.

And we are here to take it back. The time has come for a president who will be honest about the choices and the challenges we face, who will listen to you and learn from you, even when we disagree, who won't just tell you what you want to hear, but what you need to know. And in New Hampshire, if you give me the same chance that Iowa did tonight, I will be that president for America.

I'll be a president who finally makes health care affordable and available to every single American, the same way I expanded health care in Illinois, by bringing Democrats and Republicans together to get the job done. I'll be a president who

ends the tax breaks for companies that ship our jobs overseas and put a middle-class tax cut into the pockets of working Americans who deserve it.

I'll be a president who harnesses the ingenuity of farmers and scientists and entrepreneurs to free this nation from the tyranny of oil once and for all. And I'll be a president who ends this war in Iraq and finally brings our troops home... who restores our moral standing, who understands that 9/11 is not a way to scare up votes but a challenge that should unite America and the world against the common threats of the 21st century. Common threats of terrorism and nuclear weapons, climate change and poverty, genocide and disease.

(3) Thanking those who work for the victory

Tonight, we are one step closer to that vision of America because of what you did here in Iowa. And so I'd especially like to thank the organizers and the precinct captains, the volunteers and the staff who made this all possible.

And while I'm at it on thank yous, I think it makes sense for me to thank the love of my life, the rock of the Obama family, the closer on the campaign trail. Give it up for Michelle Obama.

I know you didn't do this for me. You did this -- you did this because you believed so deeply in the most American of ideas -- that in the face of impossible odds, people who love this country can change it. I know this. I know this because while I may be standing here tonight, I'll never forget that my journey began on the streets of Chicago doing what so many of you have done for this campaign and all the campaigns here in Iowa, organizing and working and fighting to make people's lives just a little bit better.

I know how hard it is. It comes with little sleep, little pay and a lot of sacrifice. There are days of disappointment. But sometimes, just sometimes, there are nights like this; a night that, years from now, when we've made the changes we believe in, when more families can afford to see a doctor, when our children -- when Malia and Sasha and your children inherit a planet that's a little cleaner and safer, when the world sees America differently, and America sees itself as a nation less divided and more united, you'll be able to look back with pride and say that this was the moment when it all began.

(4) The spirit of hope is alive to remake the nation and the world

This was the moment when the improbable beat what Washington always said was inevitable. This was the moment when we tore down barriers that have divided us for too long; when we rallied people of all parties and ages to a common cause; when we finally gave Americans who have never participated in politics a reason to stand up and to do so. This was the moment when we finally beat back the policies of fear

and doubts and cynicism, the politics where we tear each other down instead of lifting this country up. This was the moment.

Years from now, you'll look back and you'll say that this was the moment, this was the place where America remembered what it means to hope. For many months, we've been teased, even derided for talking about hope. But we always knew that hope is not blind optimism. It's not ignoring the enormity of the tasks ahead or the roadblocks that stand in our path. It's not sitting on the sidelines or shirking from a fight. Hope is that thing inside us that insists, despite all the evidence to the contrary, that something better awaits us if we have the courage to reach for it and to work for it and to fight for it.

Hope is what I saw in the eyes of the young woman in Cedar Rapids who works the night shift after a full day of college and still can't afford health care for a sister who's ill. A young woman who still believes that this country will give her the chance to live out her dreams.

Hope is what I heard in the voice of the New Hampshire woman who told me that she hasn't been able to breathe since her nephew left for Iraq. Who still goes to bed each night praying for his safe return.

I know you didn't do this for me.. What led the greatest of generations to free a continent and heal a nation. What led young women and young men to sit at lunch counters and brave fire hoses and march through Selma and Montgomery for freedom's cause.

Hope – hope is what led me here today. With a father from Kenya, a mother from Kansas and a story that could only happen in the United States of America.

Hope is the bedrock of this nation. The belief that our destiny will not be written for us, but by us, by all those men and women who are not content to settle for the world as it is, who have the courage to remake the world as it should be. That is what we started here in Iowa and that is the message we can now carry to New Hampshire and beyond.

(5) A call that the victory of the rising coalition is to inspire the rest of the nation

The same message we had when we were up and when we were down; the one that can save this country, brick by brick, block by block, calloused hand by calloused hand, that together, ordinary people can do extraordinary things. Because we are not a collection of red states and blue states. We are the United States of America. And in this moment, in this election, we are ready to believe again.

Thank you, Iowa.

(http://www.barackobama.com/2008/01/03/remarks_of_senator_barack_obam_39.php , accessed November 2, 2009)

